

Approved For Release 1999/08/24 : CIA-RDP78-

This document consists of
2 pages; Copy 2 of 6
copies; Series ~~17~~

P

5/11/56

~~SECRET~~

MEMORANDUM FOR: U/OP - Mr. Richards

Subject: Comment on OCB paper, "International Broadcasting Facilities", dated May 3, 1956

This paper and its attachments, which relate to NSC Action 1386b, are concerned with the question of United States utilization of certain high powered radio transmitters now in storage. The file indicates a State Department -- along with other agencies in TPIB and COBAT -- position advocating immediate action to get some of the remaining transmitters installed in Greece and the Philippines.

I understand that the Director of USIA has expressed reservations about the proposals on the ground that he believed NSC Action 1386b was permissive and not mandatory. If the NSC Action is permissive, the Director of USIA reportedly feels that the program should not be undertaken for financial and other reasons. If it is to be construed as mandatory, I believe USIA would like to appeal the decision.

P did not clear the State paper on this proposal and we have reservations about any project for erection of more high powered VOA transmitters at this time.

P reservations are based on the following questions:

(1) Is it wise to tie up substantial sums of public money to erect and operate the equipment on non-U.S. soil? The initial installation cost is only one factor. It must be noted that funds for operation would be an inescapable annual charge for an indefinite period. We have the Ceylon and Salonika situations to remind us of the potential headaches of U.S. radio bases on foreign soil.

(2) Whether more of the same (i.e. high power transmitters to get through jamming) is the answer to the basic communication problem vis-a-vis the USSR? Perhaps other forms of communication have a higher priority (Amerika Magazine, exhibits, etc.)?

~~SECRET~~

~~SECRET~~

-2-

(3) The usefulness at present of more official United States radio propaganda activity? Should we not be considering alternatives? For example, we might well consider alternatives of non-U.S. official stations using the equipment (Radio Liberation), or in having non-U.S. Government operation (Philippine Government as part of SEATO operation with no United States tag such as VOA).

(4) Whether this kind of an approach reflects United States requirements in relation to the new policy and operating lines which are emerging in United States-Free World relations with the Soviet Bloc. It would appear more useful to be putting our efforts into getting our people planted within the various indigenous radio-TV setups as regular employees of the local government rather than having more United States tagged stations. We ought to be thinking in long-term fashion about how we can develop Free World strength with an indigenous and not a United States face. This proposal would channel our assets and energy in the opposite direction. I doubt that this is to our long-range advantage.

P - Jesse M. MacKnight

CC:

TRC - Mr. Nesbitt

P - PHB-SJ

~~SECRET~~

P:JMMacKnight:jf